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Juror qualification questionnaires mailed to residents

Midland Daily News

This week, 7,000 Midland County residents will receive juror qualification questionnaires in the mail.

The residents were randomly selected by computer from an index of all county residents who have a Michigan driver license or state ID card. Receiving one of the questionnaires means the resident is being considered as a potential juror for the county during the fiscal year of Oct. 1, 2005 to Sept. 30, 2006. State law requires the questionnaires to be filled out and returned within 10 days from the date they are received.

Answers on the questionnaires will be reviewed by the Midland County Jury Board, which consists of three people appointed by the governor after recommendation by circuit court judges. There is a minimum of one person each from the Republican and Democratic parties, and only the board has access to the questionnaires. The board removes residents with any of the following exemptions:

- * not a U.S. citizen,
- * does not speak or understand English,
- * has served as a juror in the last 12 months,
- * has been convicted of a felony,
- * has a mental or physical disability that would affect jury service.

Residents who are age 70 or older can exempt themselves.

Potential jurors are asked to be very specific about the times they are unable to serve on a jury because of preplanned vacations, business or other commitments.

Jury trials vary in length, with many in district court lasting only one day, and those in circuit court lasting a few days to a week. Sequestration is rare.

Service is paid at \$12.50 per half-day or \$25 for the first day, and at \$20 per half-day or \$40 for a full day after that. Mileage is paid at 30 cents per mile to and from the courthouse.

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